

This is my written testimony and I will not be testifying at the hearing. I am in support of Senate Bill no. 317 with amendments as described below.

“Reading isn’t everything.”

--Reading teacher

“Not being able to read is like trying to walk on one leg.”

--Unremediated dyslexic adult.

Reading may not be everything if you can read, but it’s pretty limiting if you can’t. Imagine trying to read prescription information, hazard warnings, directions, highway signs, memos at work, bank statements, letters and cards from loved ones, menus in unfamiliar restaurants for just a few examples.

You, the Connecticut legislators, have helped dyslexic students by getting their condition identified in school education planning meetings (IEPs). Now please extend your support of these deserving students—approximately 20 percent of the school population-- by requiring appropriate and sufficient teacher preparation. A weekend workshop or a few hours of a general education class may describe the characteristics and challenges of dyslexia, but it is not enough to prepare a teacher to effectively teach dyslexic students to read.

As a special education teacher years ago, I had no idea how to help the dyslexic students who were entrusted to me for intensive reading instruction. I let those students down completely. It was not until I received specific training to work with dyslexic students that I was able to help them become readers.

Prospective teachers seeking a remedial reading endorsement from CT Institutions of Higher Education need a graduate level, evidence-based curriculum aligned with IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading.

Please require sufficient training of reading teachers in SB 317 so that we no longer let down our deserving dyslexic population.

Thank you.

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